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NEWS

Marine Band
Marine Chamber Orchestra
Marine Chamber Ensembles

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PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE

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Marine Band Pays Tribute to Kennedy Center Honoree John Williams

WASHINGTON—"The President's Own" United States Marine Band was among special guests who paid tribute to Academy Award-winning composer **John Williams**, one of six 2004 Kennedy Center Honors recipients. The gala performance, held Sunday, Dec. 5, at the John F. Kennedy Center Opera House and attended by esteemed guests including President and Mrs. George W. Bush, will air on **Tuesday, Dec. 21, on CBS**.

"This year the Kennedy Center honors not the usual five but six extraordinary individuals whose unique and abundant artistry has contributed significantly to the cultural life of our nation and the world," said Kennedy Center Chairman Stephen Schwarzman, calling John Williams "one of the most influential American composers of the past four decades."

"The President's Own" is no stranger to the Kennedy Center Honors. Its usual role during the weekend of events involves the Marine Chamber Orchestra performing for the President and his guests at a White House reception prior to the gala at the Kennedy Center. This year, however, George Stevens, the longtime producer of the Kennedy Center Honors, invited the Marine Band to perform after learning of Williams' relationship with the band. Williams conducted the band during its 205th anniversary performance in July 2003, also held at the Kennedy Center. The Marine Band took center stage, lead by Leonard Slatkin, music director of the National Symphony Orchestra, to perform some of Mr. Williams' best-known scores, including music from *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, and *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*.

Since its inception in 1978, the Kennedy Center Honors has reinvented the way America rewards its artists. America's equivalent of a British knighthood, or the French Legion of Honor, the Honors serves for millions of American arts lovers as the year's crowning event, paying tribute to the nation's preeminent artists with performances by the great stars of today who have followed in their footsteps.

The Marine Band is America's oldest professional musical organization. Founded in 1798, the band has performed for every U.S. President since John Adams. Given the title "The President's Own" by Thomas Jefferson, the Marine Band's primary mission is to provide music for the President of the United States and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

—USMB—

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